BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Stats

Infoline

Contact bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca

Issue: 08-17

April 25, 2008

- **Provincial retail sales down 1.1% in February**
- **New motor vehicle sales in BC up 3.6% in 2007**
- **Internet sales in Canada reach $62.7 billion in 2007**

The Economy

- **Total retail sales in the province continued on a downward trend in 2008, as retailers experienced a 1.1% drop (*seasonally adjusted*) in February.** Revenues were down across most sectors, including automotive (-1.7%) where an increase in sales at gasoline stations (+3.3%) was not enough to offset declines at used & recreational motor vehicle (-5.2%) and new car (-4.6%) dealers. Retailers of furniture, home furnishings & electronics (-2.3%) and general merchandise (-1.7%) also had a less lucrative month. The only retail trade sector to show an increase in February was food & beverage stores (+1.5%), ending a two-month-long downturn.

  Nationally, total retail sales fell (-0.7%) for the first time in five months as none of the major sectors posted gains. New Brunswick (+1.1%), Nova Scotia (+0.3%) and Quebec (+0.2%) were the only provinces that bucked the national trend.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **New car dealers in BC sold 201,596 vehicles in 2007, a 3.6% increase compared to the previous year.** At the provincial level, Newfoundland (+16.8%), Saskatchewan (+14.1%), PEI (+7.5%) and New Brunswick (+5.3%) recorded higher sales growth. Although the average price of a new motor vehicle in BC ($33,856) was unchanged in 2007, it was the third highest in the country after Saskatchewan ($34,662) and Alberta ($35,348).

  At the national level, new motor vehicle sales rose (+1.5%) for the third straight year in 2007. Unit sales of trucks, which includes minivans, sport-utility vehicles, light & heavy trucks, vans and buses, surged 3.5% to a record high 831,535 units last year. *Data Source: SC Cat. # 11-621-MWE2008069*

Technology

- **In December 2007, one in ten households in BC relied solely on cell phones for their primary telephone service.** This proportion was the highest among the provinces and a significant increase from the same month in the previous year (6%). In addition, the number of households that reported having at least one cell phone also rose from December 2006 (69%) to December 2007 (76%). The prevalence of cable telephone or Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services was up from 9% to 13% of households over the same period, likely reflecting increased competition in the telecommunications industry.

  An estimated 6% of Canadian households relied solely on cell phones in December 2007 while 72% reported using at least one cell phone in the household, with Quebec (63%) having the lowest proportion and Alberta (84%) the highest.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Internet sales in Canada reached $62.7 billion in 2007, up 26% from 2006.** The private sector continued to dominate online sales, as e-commerce by private sector firms comprised the lion's share ($58.2 billion) of online sales while $4.5 billion was attributed to the public sector.

  Public organizations in the education services sector reported the highest prevalence of Internet sales (39%), while most of the value of online sales was generated by the wholesale trade (17%), transportation & warehousing (16%), manufacturing (15%) and retail trade (10%) sectors.

  The use of information and communications technologies differs among the private and public sectors. Wireless communications, such as

Did you know...
Most British Columbians (85%) would give themselves a "B" (48%) or a "C" (37%) for their efforts in helping to preserve and protect the environment. *Source: Ipsos Canada*

BlackBerry® and other devices, were reportedly used by 77% of private sector firms compared to 91% of public sector organizations. The prevalence of Internet (87%) and e-mail (81%) use in the private sector was also lower than the public sector, where all organizations used these technologies. In addition, a significantly lower proportion (41%) of firms in the private sector had a website compared to 93% in the public sector.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Health

- **Canadian men sleep less than women—8 hours and 7 minutes on average or 11 minutes less than their female counterparts.** According to data from the 2005 General Social Survey (GSS), this difference in sleeping patterns between the genders also holds when labour force attachment is taken into account—men who work full-time sleep 14 minutes less than women who are employed on a full-time basis. Overall, full-time workers got 24 minutes less sleep than those who were not in the labour force.

  Although Canadians with non-typical work schedules (e.g., shift work) slept for a similar amount of time compared to workers on a daytime schedule, there were differences in the quality of sleep. For example, 34% of shift workers indicated that they had problems falling asleep or staying asleep compared to slightly more than a quarter (26%) of workers with regular daytime jobs.

  The GSS data also revealed that individuals with a personal income of $60,000 or more slept 40 minutes less than those earning under $20,000. High-income Canadians tend to dedicate more time to their job, spend less time with their children and participate less in leisure activities. As a result, their lifestyle affects their sleep patterns.

  Working long hours also translates into less sleep. On average, people who had worked for more than 9 hours slept for 7 hours and 32 minutes—41 minutes less per night than those who had worked for less than 4 hours. Commuting time also has an effect, as workers with short commutes (1 to 30 minutes per day) slept on average 22 minutes longer than those with commuting times of an hour or more. The results also showed that married Canadians and those with children in the household slept less.

  Data Source: SC Cat. # 11-008-XWE

- **There will be an estimated 20,500 new cases of cancer in British Columbia this year.** A total of 10,800 men and 9,700 women are expected to be diagnosed with cancer in 2008. The most common affliction for men will be prostate cancer with an estimated 2,900 new cases, while breast cancer (2,700) will continue to be the leading form of the disease for women.

  In 2008, the overall cancer incidence rate for men in BC is expected to be the lowest in Canada at 418 new cases per 100,000 population, while Nova Scotia (550), PEI (536) and Alberta (513) will have the highest rates. Similarly, it is anticipated that the rate of new cancer cases for women (322) will be among the lowest in the country.

  Data Source: Canadian Cancer Society & National Cancer Institute of Canada

Marriage

- **In 2006, there were 23,507 marriages recorded in BC.** Most (64%) couples tied the knot for the first time, while 13% of marriages were between individuals who were previously divorced. Close to a third (31%) of those marrying were in their twenties while there were fewer marriages (18%) where both parties were in their thirties. A significant proportion (38%) of marriages were solemnized by religious representatives. Of those who opted for a religious wedding, one in three were married in Catholic (12%), United (11%) and Pentecostal (10%) churches. Sikh marriages accounted for nearly half of the 13% of ceremonies that involved non-Christian religions.

  Data Source: BC Vital Statistics Agency

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Contact: Chad Stroomer
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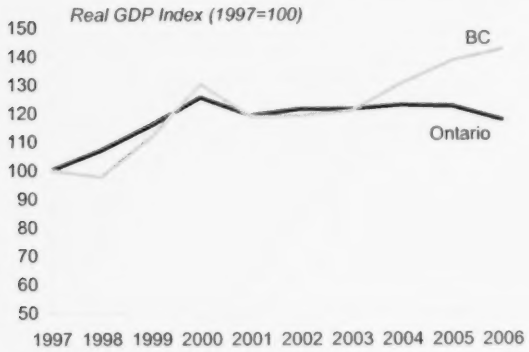
Originally published in
Business Indicators Issue 08-03

Made in BC

The manufacturing sector plays an integral role in the economy of British Columbia, generating an estimated $16.4 billion (+2.9%) or 11% of the province's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2006. Since 1997, manufacturing GDP has expanded 42.3%, considerably faster than in provinces considered to be Canada's manufacturing heartland such as Ontario, which has seen manufacturing GDP grow at a more modest pace (+17.4%).

Manufacturing GDP in BC has expanded faster than that in Ontario in recent years



Data Source: Statistics Canada

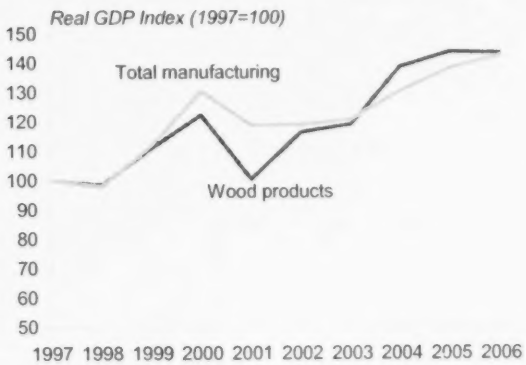
Looking at the short-term, however, growth in manufacturing appears to be slowing. While expansion in manufacturing was 8.1% in 2004 and 6.0% in 2005, outpacing the provincial economy, by 2006 growth in manufacturing GDP had slowed (+2.9%) to a level well below the all-industry average (+3.6%).

Accounting for 9% of Canada's total manufacturing GDP, BC's has the fourth largest manufacturing sector in the country, behind Ontario (49%), Quebec (20%) and Alberta (10%).

Sector GDP by industry

BC's wood industry is the largest in Canada, making up 40% of the national wood industry GDP in 2006 and accounts for twice as much as the provinces with the next largest shares, Quebec (22%) and Ontario (19%). Between 1997 and 2006, wood manufacturing grew 43.1% and accounted for 30% of BC's manufacturing GDP. Following a slump (-17.9%) in 2001, the industry had risen steadily through the early part of the decade. In 2006, however, growth in the wood industry came to a halt.

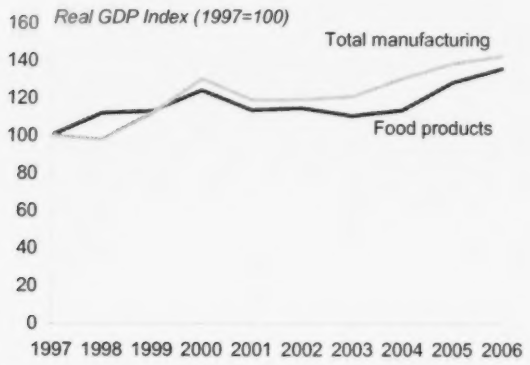
Wood products advanced 43.1% since 1997



Data Source: Statistics Canada

Food production, BC's second largest manufacturing industry, produced $1.7 billion in value added goods in 2006, an increase of 5.8% over 2005. In particular, the dairy industry has experienced the fastest growth. Despite a slight dip in 2006, GDP of dairy products has nearly doubled (+89.9%) since 1997. Meat production, the largest food products industry expanded 54.4% between 1997 and 2006. Overall, BC's food manufacturing industry accounts for slightly less than one-tenth of the national total, ranking fourth behind Ontario (46%), Quebec (21%), and Alberta (10%) in terms of GDP.

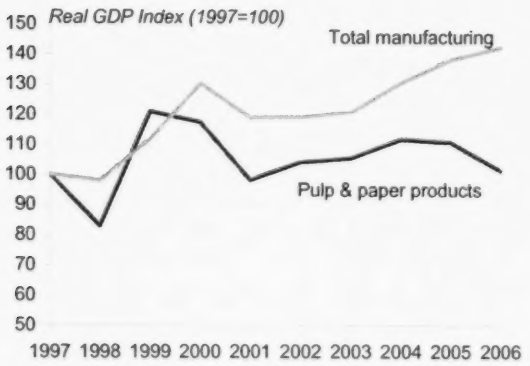
Food manufacturing GDP rose 5.8% in 2006



Data Source: Statistics Canada

Once accounting for as much as 12% of the province's manufacturing GDP, growth in the paper industry has stagnated in recent years, advancing only slightly (+1.1%) in the decade since 1997. GDP in the paper industry fell (-8.5%) to $1.3 billion in 2006 and now accounts for just 9% of manufacturing GDP. The lion's share of paper products made in Canada is manufactured in either Quebec (37%) or Ontario (32%) with BC making roughly 13% of the country's paper products.

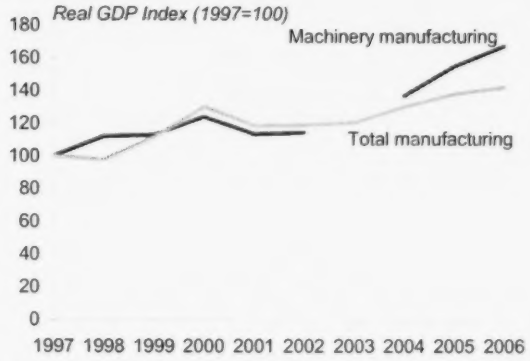
Pulp & paper industry GDP was off 8.5% in 2006



Data Source: Statistics Canada

Relied upon by many industries such as agriculture, construction and mining, as well as many other manufacturers within the sector, machinery production has experienced rapid growth. Since 1997, GDP in the industry has risen 67.3% making it one of the fastest growing industries in the sector. In 2006, GDP rose 8.0% to $1.1 billion, accounting for 7% of total manufacturing.

GDP in machinery manufacturing advanced 8.0% in 2006[1]

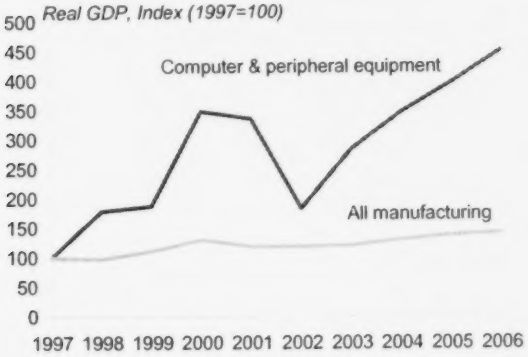


Data Source: Statistics Canada

Since 1997, several industries have risen in importance within the manufacturing sector. Despite a downturn between 2001 and 2002, the computer & peripheral equipment industry has more than quadrupled (+350%) its GDP from $48 million in 1997 to $220 million in 2006. A related industry, electronic products (+139%) has seen GDP increase sharply since 1997.

[1] GDP data for machinery production in 2003 is suppressed due to confidentiality requirements.

Computer & peripheral equipment production has quadrupled since 1997



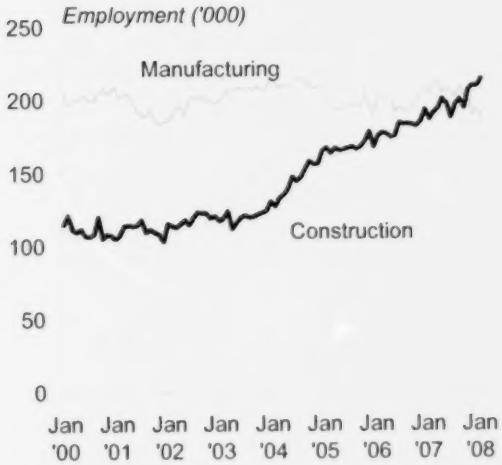
Data Source: Statistics Canada

Manufacturers of pharmaceuticals & medicines in BC saw an increase in GDP on par with that of the electronics industry, more than doubling (+134%) between 1997 and 2006.

205,100 employed in BC's manufacturing sector[2]

British Columbia's manufacturing sector provided jobs for 9% of the province's workforce in 2007 and was the largest employer in the goods sector. Employment in manufacturing was estimated at 205,100 in 2007, a 3.8% increase from the previous year. While many employers such as transportation equipment (+28.6%) and food (+17.9%) expanded the number of jobs offered, employment in the paper and wood industries remained unchanged. In November 2007, construction surpassed manufacturing as the largest employer in the goods sector.

Construction passed manufacturing as largest employer in the goods sector in late 2007



Data Source: Statistics Canada

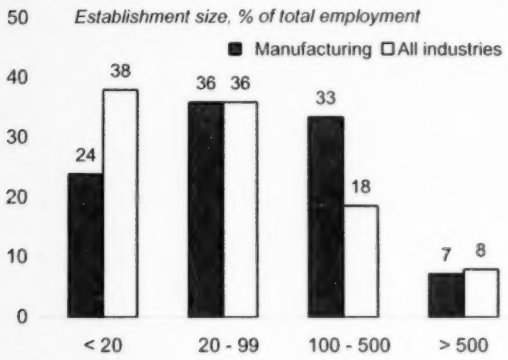
Self-employment in the manufacturing sector is uncommon

Comparatively high start-up costs for most types of manufacturing are a significant barrier to entry, meaning that self-employment in the sector is relatively low. In 2007, an estimated 19,200 (9%) of workers in the manufacturing sector were self-employed. Self-employment, when it does exist, tends to occur in industries such as textiles, leather and furniture where the nature of the product allows for smaller manufacturing facilities.

In general, however, manufacturing establish-ments tend to be somewhat larger than those in other sectors. Smaller-sized establishments with fewer than 20 employees made up about one-quarter (24%) of the businesses in the manufacturing sector. Economy wide that figure is closer to two-fifths (38%). However, larger businesses (i.e. those with more than 100 employees) account for 40% of manufacturing establishments, which drops to 24% when all other industries are taken into consideration.

[2] Based on data from the Labour Force Survey

Manufacturing establishments are typically larger than in other industries



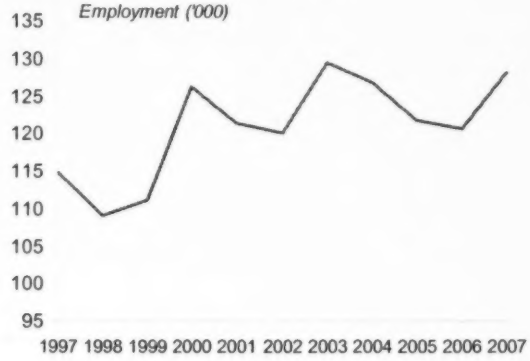
Data Source: Statistics Canada

Manufacturing employment by region

Mainland/Southwest is home to 62% of all manufacturing jobs in the province. While employment is down from a peak of 129,300 reached in 2003, in 2007, an estimated 128,100 were employed in manufacturing, an increase of 11.5% since 1997 and a rise of 6.1% since 2006.

Many regions of the province have seen slow growth or even declines in employment in the manufacturing sector since 1997 likely due to mill and plant closures in smaller or more remote communities around BC. The rising value of the Canadian dollar, higher transportation costs and costly tariffs have forced many manufacturers operating at the margin out of business.

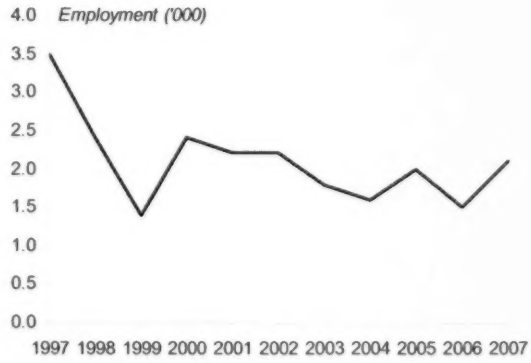
Manufacturing employment in Mainland /Southwest has gone through many ups and downs over the past decade



Data Source: Statistics Canada

One of the regions hardest hit with job losses is Northeast. In 1997, manufacturing supported an estimated 3,500 workers, accounting for 11% of total employment in the region. By 2007, however, the number of jobs in manufacturing had dwindled (-40.0%) to a little more than half of that amount (2,100).

Manufacturing employment in Northeast has declined sharply since 1997



Data Source: Statistics Canada

Vancouver Island/Coast has seen a 28.9% decrease in the number of jobs in manufacturing since 1997 with an especially sharp decrease (-11.5%) recorded in 2007. In Kootenay, following two years of significant declines in both 2005 and 2006, employment in manufacturing increased 7.7% in 2007.

A 12.7% rise in the number of jobs in manufacturing in North Coast/Nechako was observed in 2007, recovering many of the 1,300 jobs lost in the region in 2006. Cariboo, having shed more than one-fifth (-21.2%) of its employees in manufacturing between 1997 and 2000, has since stabilized in recent years with employment in manufacturing expanding 1.4% in 2007.

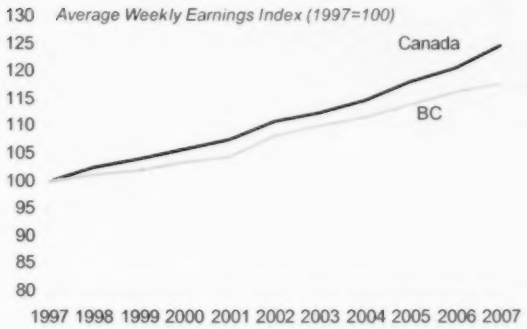
In Thompson/Okanagan, the number of manufacturing jobs has jumped 18.3% to 25,800 since 1997. Despite the increase in the number of jobs between 1997 and 2007, the share of the workforce employed by manufacturing has fallen slightly from a high of 13% in 1999 to roughly 10% by 2007.

Manufacturing workers in BC earned $8.6 billion in 2007

Workers in the manufacturing sector took home an estimated $8.6 million in wages and salaries during 2007, down 0.6% from the previous year. On a weekly basis, average earnings in the manufacturing sector were $909.68 in 2007, an increase of 1.5% over the previous year[3].

Compared to the rest of Canada, in terms of average weekly earnings, BC's workers in the manufacturing sector place third highest after Ontario ($1,005.86) and Alberta ($994.91). Nationally, average weekly earnings in the manufacturing sector were $938.14 in 2007.

Wages in the manufacturing sector have risen slower than the national average



Data Source: Statistics Canada

[3] Average weekly earnings data is based on data from the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH).

New Workshop

Statistics Canada Summer Data Institute

The Summer Data Institute is a 2-day hands-on data analysis workshop conducted in a computer-equipped classroom. Statistical software is used to produce quantitative measures on data from a standard Statistics Canada public use microdata file. While some time is given to discussion of the conceptual basis, methodology and theoretical applications of the statistics, the emphasis in this workshop is on exercises using the software to produce and interpret statistics from the microdata file to address practical research questions.

Statistical techniques covered in the workshop include:

- Frequency distributions and graphing techniques
- Measures of central tendency and dispersion
- Cross-tabulations and contingency tables
- Correlations
- Simple and multiple regressions

The workshop is appropriate for beginner to intermediate level analysts in the public and private sectors, as well as members of the academic community interested in learning how to use data to answer "real world" questions.

The Summer Data Institute is being offered in SPSS-equipped computer classrooms at the University of Victoria and Camosun College. Statistics Canada's General Social Survey Cycle 19 public use microdata file provides the data to be used in the workshop, which is led by an experienced Statistics Canada course instructor.

Register early, Space is limited. Price: $499 + GST = $523.95.

University of Victoria
Human & Social Development Building
Lab Facility HSD A170
May 6-7, 2008
8:30 am—4:30 pm

Camosun College, Lansdowne Campus
Ewing Building, Room 112
3100 Foul Bay Road
June 3-4, 2008
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Other course offering:
A 1-day GIS workshop is offered at Camosun College on June 5, 2008. For more information visit: www.camosun.ca/ce/registrar.

REGISTRATION

□ University of Victoria or □ Camosun College

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Visa___ M/C___ Amex__ Cheque__ Amount (incl. GST): _____

Card No: _____

Cardholder: _____Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Fed. Govt: Dept#: _____ Org#: _____ Ref#: _____

Refund Policy—Registrations are guaranteed once payment is received. Fees will be refunded, less $75 administration charge, if written notice is received at least 3 business days prior to the workshop. Substitutions are permitted at any time. Group rates are also available.

Return form with payment to:
Workshop Registrar
Statistics Canada
Suite 574, 220—4th Ave. SE
Calgary, AB T2G 4X3
Tel: (403) 292-6677
Fax: (403) 292-5994

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Issue 08-17

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also on the **Internet** at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/08	% change on one year ago
BC	4,414.0	1.5
Canada	33,143.6	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2006	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	180,328	6.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	158,335	3.3
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita)*	36,649	1.9
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	24,051	5.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Feb	3,342	-0.2
Merchandise Exports - Feb	2,552	8.2
Retail Sales - Feb	4,744	-1.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Mar 2008)		
BC	1.2	1.4
Vancouver	1.5	1.7
Victoria	0.6	0.8
Canada	1.4	2.1
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Mar '08	prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,422	0.8
Employed - BC	2,318	0.6
Unemployed - BC	104	5.1
		Feb '08
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	4.3	4.1
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	6.0	5.8
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Apr 23/08	Apr 25/07
Prime Business Rate	5.25	6.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.95	6.60
- 5 year	6.99	6.64
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Apr 23/08	Apr 25/07
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0195	1.1145
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9830	0.8973
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Mar '08	one year ago
BC	761.02	2.4
Canada	767.70	4.4

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

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Next week

- Business Indicators, April 2008
- Current Statistics, April 2008
- 2006 Census: Thursday, May 1
  Income, Earnings, Shelter Costs

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